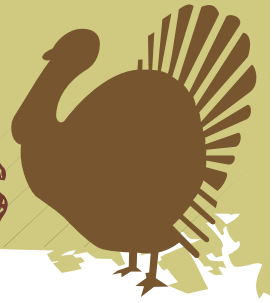
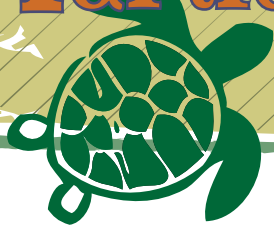


Turtle Tracks & Turkey Tails



A Newsletter for Junior Rangers and their Families Spring 2011

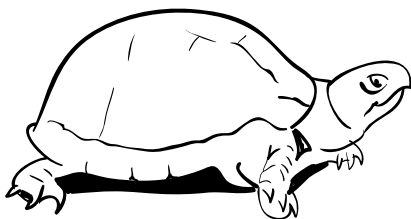


If you like wildlife, May is a great month to visit NC State Parks. After a long cold winter, plants and animals are ready to grow. Some animals, such as bats and groundhogs, have been hibernating. They do not eat or grow during the winter. They just sleep to reserve their energy. But when spring comes, the trees and flowers bud and the animals become very active!

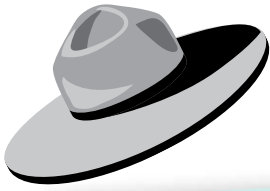
In the spring, animals are usually looking for a mate. In April at Merchants Millpond State Park, many birds pair up and build nests. But May is the most active month for turtles, because this is when they lay most of their eggs. 2011 is the

"Year of the Turtle" at NC State Parks, so it's a good time to learn more about them. Why not visit the park closest to you and talk to the rangers about wildlife? Find out how many types of turtles live in the park and learn about their habitats. At Merchants Millpond we only have one turtle that lives on land, the box turtle (Box turtles occasionally do take a swim!). All the rest are aquatic turtles that are found in or around the water. Write us back and tell us what you find.

by Jane Wynch,
Ranger at Merchants Millpond State Park



Upcoming Events



Summer Camps at Haw River State Park

- Mammals Day Camp, June 20th-24th (rising 2nd-6th graders)
- Adventure Day Camp, June 20th - 24th (rising 7th & 8th graders)
- Native American Explorations Day Camp, June 27th- July 1st (rising 2nd - 6th graders)
- Grand Camps (Overnight), Aug 8th-10th or Aug 15th -17th (rising 2nd - 6th graders and their grandparent) Call (336) 342-6163, or www.ncparks.gov and select Haw River.

May 28th - June 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th Carnivorous Plant Hike at Carolina Beach State Park

Take a hike with a park ranger and learn about the fascinating world of carnivorous plants. See sundews, bladderworts, butterworts, pitcher plants and the Venus fly trap. Meet at the Nature Trail parking lot at 10:00 a.m.

May 29th

Beautiful Bluebirds at Goose Creek State Park

Spring is here and the bluebirds have found their favorite nesting sites. Join a ranger for a short presentation and take a guided hike in hopes of seeing the birds in action. Wear comfortable shoes. Meet at 3:00 p.m. in the visitor center.

June 4th (9:00 p.m.) and July 2nd (9:30 p.m.)

Monthly Astronomy Viewing at Jordan Lake

Join astronomers with the Morehead Planetarium to see planets and stars at the Ebenezer Church Recreation Area. Check the "News" at the home page of www.moreheadplanetarium.org or call Guest Relations at (919) 962-1236 on the day of the session to be sure of weather conditions.

June 4th

Frogs & Lizards & Snakes, Oh My! at Merchants Millpond State Park

Many amphibians and reptiles call Merchants Millpond State Park home. Discover more about these wondrous creatures. Meet in the visitor center at 3:00 p.m.

June 18th

Storm Fest at the Museum of Natural Sciences

Meet meteorologists from news stations, learn about why weather happens, how to predict it, and what's it like to be on TV! 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. in downtown Raleigh.

July 2nd, 3rd & 4th

Festival for the Eno

Come out to West Point on the Eno in Durham for this famous celebration. Music, food, arts and programs each day from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Tickets are required and they support the Eno River Association. \$10 online, \$15 at the gate. Children under 12 admitted free. For schedule of events, directions, and parking shuttle information visit www.enoriver.org.

The Laughing Gull



What do you call a bear with no teeth?

A Gummy Bear

What did snail say when it was riding on the box turtle's back?

Weeeeeeeee!

What do you call a turtle that can fly?

Shellicopter

Send your funny and corny jokes to the laughing gull at denr.dpr.education@ncmail.net

The NATURE WALL

Photos, artwork, poems and stories
from Park Rangers and Junior Rangers



Common snapping turtle by
Junior Ranger Eleanor.



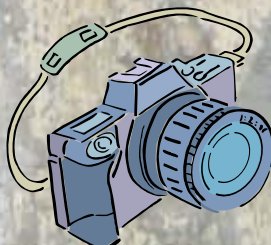
Snapping turtle up close and personal by
Junior Ranger Eleanor.



Goose Creek State Park by
Junior Ranger Alyssa.



American alligator sunbathing with turtles at
Merchants Millpond by Chuck.



Send in your photos at denr.dpr.education@ncmail.net or mail them in to Education, 1615 MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699. Be sure to include your name and address. Every junior ranger who sends in a photo, poem or artwork will receive a special prize in the mail!

Nature Notes from the Trail

Turtle-ly Awesome Facts

Come out of your shell and celebrate during the "Year of the Turtle". How many questions can you answer?

- 1) Which freshwater turtle eats frogs, snakes and even baby ducks?
- 2) Can turtles climb trees?
- 3) How many different kinds of turtles are there in North Carolina? 7, 14 or 21?

Answers:

1. The common snapping turtle
2. Yes! In North Carolina, mud turtles and musk turtles sometimes do.
3. There are 21 different kinds. Scientists call each unique kind of animal a species.



Tell us about your unique wildlife sighting!

Write denr.dpr.education@ncmail.net or sean.higgins@ncdenr.gov.

Or mail your message to Junior Rangers,
1615 MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699.

